

*InterACT Presents*  
**Transportation Priorities Project: Dream It / Fund It / Build It**  
A Community Priorities and Design Initiative for Clark County

## **Jurisdiction Interview Comments**

**Twenty-three individuals from ports, cities, county were interviewed.**

**The following questions were posed for the purpose of gaining information to use in shaping the Transportation Priorities Project area meetings, area forums and the regional summit:**

- *What would be the most valuable outcomes or products from the TPP process for your jurisdiction?*
- *How would you characterize the state of the Clark County region's transportation system as a whole? How about the part of transportation system that is in your purview?*
- *What specific problems/challenges related to transportation are at the top of your list?*
- *What is at risk if the transportation system development and funding trends continue as they have?*
- *How is the Clark County region doing at getting its fair share of state and federal funding compared to other regions in Washington State?*
- *What funding mechanisms should be included for consideration?*
- *What strategies (if any) have you considered for getting additional funding for transportation?*
- *What are the key barriers/challenges, current or future, that need to be overcome in order to better build an excellent transportation system?*

**The following are responses from elected and appointed officials throughout Clark County:**

- *Want this community to tell us what they want and what would be an acceptable way to pay for it.*
- *Traffic Futures has done a lot; reflected on the 2023 map and this out to be a place to start – you can add or subtract, e.g., close the loop at the top of Vancouver Lake.*
- *Hope this will have a vision of what impacts citizens and think about how they get in and out of their community and to their jobs.*
- *City transportation people are worried that we're going to reconfigure their plan (with the information gathered in this process).*
- *Are they (citizens) willing to pay for it?*
- *Are our priorities (City's) straight?*
- *What are they willing to pay for it and HOW are they going to pay for it.*
- *Does not support a Port to Port bridge that allows civilian traffic; does support a small toll for trucks.*
- *Need to concentrate on staff. Some are insecure about this process.*
- *Benefit of the process? Is really hoping to learn what are people willing to pay for. May cause staff to look at the 6-year plan.*
- *Will recommend that the RTC not finalize the 20-year plan until TPP is finished.*
- *While we're rebuilding Fourth Plain, there is talk about expanding it to four lanes.*

- *TPP must take into consideration volumes of traffic.*
- *Economic development and jobs require that commerce be able to flow smoothly. People need to think about the direct relationship between economic development, jobs and the flow of traffic and provide a sense of direction to the jurisdictions.*
- *The big issues are a new I-5 bridge and light rail.*
- *Because we've not had an increase in the gas tax since '91, and autos are more efficient, revenue is flat and costs are rising.*
- *Must consider the environment that we're working in.*
- *Get a list from WDOT on current projects. When they're done, there is no more money. New projects are at risk, i.e., no more economic development and we could lose companies that we have. (Get a graph from Don that illustrates that.)*
- *It's impossible to recruit new jobs if we don't have the infrastructure.*
- *When asked, "How is the transportation doing on a scale of 1 to 5," both replied a 3+.*
- *Neighborhoods are in great shape, it's the arterials that need help.*
- *People say, "Keep the traffic out of my neighborhood."*
- *We are a donor county at both the federal and state level. We get our fair share of what we ask for (dollars), we just don't ask for enough.*
- *When asked about strategy for asking for more dollars: Need to be more forceful. State legislators are not supportive of our projects.*
- *Land use planning. Co-locate residential and jobs.*
- *Get the Port to annex 610 acres of the Chelatchie Prairie Railroad into the Port; zone light industrial; put in infrastructure to create jobs.*
- *Our emphasis is mixed use development. Projects should be a combination of light industrial/residential – live/work. Ridgefield Junction is an example.*
- *Tolling the bridges to build a new I-5 bridge and light rail.*
- *Regionalism is very important; a regional taxing authority as a funding mechanism.*
- *Need a cooperative legislative delegation at the state level.*
- *Federal and state gas taxes need to be tied to inflation (need a referendum for that).*
- *Share this project with the legislators.*
- *Transportation and how it is funded is complicated. The citizens think we have more money than we do.*
- *The education piece is important – the reality of what can be done given limited funds is important.*
- *They want the improvement but they don't want to pay for it.*
- *What is this education gap?*
- *What are you really willing to fund?*
- *We have to build trust with this community – they have to understand cost: how you fuel the bus, how do you pay the person that drives the bus. Federal dollars buy "things" – the bus. Local dollars (state and county) fuel the bus.*
- *They (citizens) don't have good communication tools – they communicate amongst themselves.*
- *It would be a mistake to emphasize R-51.*
- *Want to know what the citizen wants but has questions around the vision. Is it choices or is it one choice that they want.*
- *There is a disconnect between what the local electeds and the state elected recognize as priorities.*
- *Citizens don't focus on something until it's a crisis.*
- *How is the transportation system doing in our region? One defines it as including 3 counties. In Clark County we're doing wonderful. Transit is good in Clark County.*

- *The region IS the metropolitan area; we must work together with TriMet to get federal funds.*
- *Portland is a dividend. Why wouldn't we want to connect with it smartly and efficiently.*
- *Ask how many cross the river and what is the greatest transportation improvement you'd like to see.*
- *Citizens need to know that what happens in Oregon affects Washington transportation issues. At least recognize them.*
- *For whatever reasons, we will always have trips between Portland and Vancouver. That link is important.*
- *How are we doing in getting federal funds? Outstanding job, looking at the whole picture (largely grants). In "mobility" – not so good (widening, capacity related areas).*
- *30% of highway dollars come from the feds; 23 cents to cities, 11 cents to counties, 12 cents stays in the state funding pot (we get some of that too). Demonstration of local support is important in obtaining federal funds.*
- *One-third of one cent of our sales tax goes to transit. (The state used to match that one-third through MVET tax.) The national average is one cent. Transit is under funded in this region comparatively.*
- *Groups to interview: Environmental Justice, neighborhoods affected by transportation, disabled, service agencies, Goodwill, the blind and deaf schools.*
- *Other hot spots/barriers: Correlation between land use and transportation issues; there has to be a better understanding between land use and transportation. This area gets a failing grade, e.g., economic development and The Discovery Corridor – all transportation has been extracted from this area.*
- *There are very serious policy issues between transportation and land use. We need a transportation board.*
- *How can we be most effective in the near term?: There is a disjoint between the state legislature and local jurisdictions. Tie community input to state legislation.*
- *JPAC will be asked to endorse the I-5 Partnership recommendations in October. Other jurisdictions?*
- *2004 C-TRAN going for a sales tax increase.*
- *TDM calls for increased C-TRAN service – plus car-pooling and vans.*
- *By the time we get to doing the EIS for light rail, C-TRAN reserves will be gone (2006).*
- *End product: Has no idea how to use. Comes after the 11/05 election. Wants to be able to say what is heard is more different than appears to general public.*
- *Always room for flexibility. Have established processes for transportation planning.*
- *Funding issues will be helpful. What citizens are willing to pay for.*
- *Likes to see things move in proactive way. Concern for self-interest.*
- *Most cities know what they need. Will this process cause them to lose focus on what they have?*
- *Funding: Who can consider \$100's of millions this county will need?*
- *Any time you get more information is good. Perception and reality are different.*
- *Education is important. People don't care until there's a crisis. What do people think versus the reality? Education is a big component. What do people perceive? Each jurisdiction has their priorities.*
- *Clark County transportation system: Overall SR500 and the Mall are great. Doesn't see what those who have to go over the river can do. Neighbor has low-end car, sits in traffic. Find a way to bring jobs here so people don't have to travel over the river.*
- *SR-14 is opening up. Doesn't see close to gridlock of past.*
- *Sees cities and county working together. Ridgefield doesn't even have a traffic light. One that blinks. They are at the beginnings of seeing traffic growth and funding needs.*

- *He's from Seattle. This is a piece of cake. Areas around freeways, interstate system. Things are not that bad.*
- *Look at I-205, 164<sup>th</sup> for poor planning, the 134<sup>th</sup> exit.*
- *Keep jobs here. I-5 bridge is a problem.*
- *Except for key choke periods, have a really good transportation system. Key hot spots.*
- *Two things involved: level of service, reality. Truth of matter is it will cost \$100 million to increase speed at 134<sup>th</sup> by 5 mph..*
- *Way we've been developing, getting funding: If they continue into future, is county at risk?*
- *Haven't we all suffered from tax? How M-VET and R-51 will play into it. Cutting taxes isn't a problem? If those trends continue...*
- *Real risk is that it takes longer to get from one place to another. Does this diminish economic development opportunity?*
- *Perception. People who come from other places—Bay area, Seattle know. It all depends on your perspective.*
- *Growth issue is there. People don't realize it has to be paid for. How does the money get divided? Maybe there are simple changes that can happen.*
- *Don't bring up light rail in the discussions—a hot button for many.*
- *Thinks it would be difficult too. The support is still not there.*
- *Build to make it easier for our citizens to work and live here. Not light rail. Spend money to bring jobs here.*
- *Public transportation: Wish we could fund bus system better.*
- *Ridgefield has no bus service whatsoever.*
- *Land use: Industrial use of land, need to get people northbound and City of Vancouver mad about it (Discovery Corridor). Vancouver says they can take 70,000 jobs. Land use-planning fights to keep jobs in Vancouver and other cities as well.*
- *Sees I-5 as the place to go. La Center, Woodland. Battle Ground needs 219<sup>th</sup> exit.*
- *"Discovery Corridor," 179<sup>th</sup> to Woodland, will become two important words.*
- *Environmental assessment takes 50-60% of funding and money gets eaten up. Yes it is needed, but it can be very costly.*
- *Supreme Court ruling on annexations; says annexations must be done by vote. This will slow it down. How to grow and support it? Get an outcome that people support.*
- *Funding compared to others: Ridgefield really does well. Get a whole lot more than we send. Whoever does it, does it well in Clark County.*
- *HOV lanes are a real problem and are not working. People like park and rides and we need buses in place before they will use. Need to have them running all the way to where people work.*
- *Where to get additional funds: "Tax Oregon!" Funds for transportation need to be designated to jobs. Be specific about which projects will be constructed with specific dollars. Where is the tax money going? People want to know.*
- *More bond-like than tax. Add "special levies" to polling.*
- *System development charges—take that off as county is already doing it to the maximum law allows. Seattle pays no impact fee.*
- *Is there a favorite way to pay? Probably regional gas tax, or title registration fee. Can see his community supporting that.*
- *No control over federal tax. State gas tax, maybe; fee per miles driven, impossible to administer. Doesn't like others. If he could toll Oregonians, he would.*
- *Likes regional gas tax, title fees, bridge tolls. Or pay to use fast lane.*

- *Besides funding, what other issues? Lawsuits, light rail. Perception is that our transportation is controlled by Oregonians. We're hostage to the I-5 project widening. Need those accords signed.*
- *Any other citizen or volunteer transportation groups? None*
- *What about the process? Future will be I-5 corridor, fairgrounds to La Center, for jobs, growth. Ridgefield is trying to bring family wage jobs.*
- *Discovery Corridor; surveyed to see who was going to Oregon, what they do when they get there.*
- *As soon as Ridgefield develops jobs, we'll be better.*
- *All: Find out what the perception is. Dig deep, get at deception.*
- *End product: Yacolt has only county roads. Coming here he found obstacles in getting through. Lots of people commute to Portland. It affects everything out there. People aren't opposed to it; but where will it go? Want to know how money will be spent.*
- *Find out what's important to them. Land use planning is built around the concept that people will ride share. What is the sentiment regarding willingness to share rides? Use C-Tran? Other ways? What is it that drives the need for a project? What is the focus?*
- *Highway 14 is the issue in Washougal. Big piece is needed to learn more about the processes, how to get money; Now they're in a fight to be prioritized. How do they rise on the list? How do they open the door to resources? They'll not have enough money to fix it all.*
- *What are the major, big issues? Question on regionalism. Can get authority to tax and fund locally? \$15/per vehicle, 10% of state gas tax is by a vote of the people.*
- *Has struggled with regional concept. Wants inclusion in Metropolitan Portland region, but risky.*
- *Can't think of anything. Funding is neutral ground.*
- *Participation is the hardest thing.*
- *Education is key. Need to match by state, what feds can pay. Senator Murray wants to bring in money to our state.*
- *How is county doing at getting its share of funding? Doing well. Have lots of projects funded by feds.*
- *We don't tell the stories very well. Need to do more talking about what we've done. Approaching how we are funding. Is using school funding model. Money rolls down. Combine different sources.*
- *Washougal is poor little stepchild there.*
- *What about the adequacy, level and flow of funding? Wouldn't cut; more important to get it. It's getting done, but how to get at the funding?*
- *Needs to be increased moderately. Need to learn how to manage what we get, besides laying more pavement. Why build wider roads just to handle traffic crunch in brief periods of the day when the rest of the time the roads are fine.*
- *So competitive to get money. Learning better avenues of funding, for federal and any of the sources of funding. Match makes things go easier. Moderate amount of increase would be more helpful.*
- *Demand management. What are the alternatives to building more? Are we going to be serious about long term fixes.*
- *Not always a congestion issue; could be safety question.*
- *Other transportation groups? Friends of Clark County, Steve Stuart. Bicycle group. Planning commissions. CREDC. Visitors Bureau.*
- *End product? Recognize that all of the jurisdictions have plans. Subdivisions have certain requirements by code. They have a ton of projects that are not necessarily funded on the list.*

*They spend lots of money to build to standards—bike lanes, sidewalks. Need to validate that people want these things (called transportation standards). Do people want the “transportation standards” amenities that are in place?*

- *Concern is that people don't know how these things are funded so they can make decisions.*
- *Educate them.*
- *What are hot topics? We faced light rail once before, and will face again. How that question is phrased will be very important as it is an emotional issue for many. Commute: 60,000 people a day who go back and forth. People pulse over there and pulse back. Look at alternate modes such as bike paths, walking.*
- *Agrees that commute is a hot button. Emotional issues are neighborhood ones, have a disconnect between what citizens want for safety, and expediency of traveling. Transit in general is an issue. Vast majority don't ride transit.*
- *Can't talk about transportation without talking about land use. We want industry, we want livability. Land use systems need to support transportation and vice versa.*
- *Does Clark County get its fair share of funding? Always have been and will continue to be a donor county. With R-51 changes, King County becomes a recipient county. Federal funds, state funds, do well. There's never enough.*
- *State of Washington is also a donor state. Federal gas tax, we get less based on allocation. Competitive money, because of congestion, growth in accidents, fare well in state.*
- *What of level of funding? Yes, need moderate to significant amount, just to meet immediate needs, and this would not let us go after goals to increase system.*
- *Funding is 75% property tax, 25% our share of gas tax. Because vehicle miles driven has become more efficient, less money from gas tax. There will be a point in the future, with no increase, we cannot keep up with maintenance. First priority of funding is maintenance of what exists. New environmental regs take 30% of funding.*
- *In '04 city is done with capital money; can only do maintenance; they compete with other general fund needs. R-51 would give them enough money to build almost two traffic lights.*
- *Must solve problems locally.*
- *Educate people to understand how things are funded and how much it costs.*
- *Other groups? Citizens' advisory team for city?*
- *Useful product/question. Create awareness that the money pit is not bottomless; how do we divide the general fund?*
- *If we can't maintain the infrastructure for safety...*
- *And for business. Sen. Murray has done a lot for us.*
- *60% of Skamania people commute over SR 14 into Clark County. Where is RTC-Skamania County study? Need to set business schedule to match peoples'.*
- *Link SR-14 to Washougal River Road.*
- *Results need to be long term. Raising expectations with this process? Be sure to stress long-term nature. Don't forget the river as means of transportation. With transportation technology meaning more miles per gallon, there's less gas tax. Don't forget railroad services.*
- *Identify the most important safety versus mobility issues. Current land use calls for commercial use of vehicles on arterials – a huge safety issue.*
- *There are growing safety issues in the rural areas: no shoulders, driveway issues, no curbing.*
- *The “comp” plan is pushing mining out into rural areas; rural roads cannot accommodate heavy trucks.*
- *School bus stops on rural roads – there are sight/distance issues.*
- *Rural folks don't complain much about mobility but they ARE concerned about safety.*
- *Everything is tied to land use planning.*

- *There are pedestrian safety issues in suburban areas; inadequate pedestrian and biking facilities.*
- *Schools and churches build where property is cheaper, but who pays for the sidewalks? They can't.*
- *Who do you give a break in the permitting process?*
- *There are environmental funding issues from the regulatory standpoints (both state and federal), e.g., suburban and rural sidewalks.*
- *In the urban areas there are fewer issues; the neighborhoods are older and more accustomed to slower traffic.*
- *The river crossing is more than a local issue. Whatever is done needs to be coordinated with others.*
- *There is so much pent up demand on the I-5 Bridge that if we build it (a new one), we would see no difference – it would be filled immediately.*
- *The mentality is that we can build our way out of congestion – but it doesn't happen.*
- *We need to know, how do you balance or prioritize funding for these issues:*
  - *Safety*
  - *Mobility*
  - *Maintenance/preservation*
  - *Pedestrian mobility*
  - *Cross circulation*
  - *Bikeways*
  - *Economic development*
  - *Neighborhood traffic safety*
- *Probe and get some preference responses.*
- *The reason people don't financially support transportation is because it's not bad yet. The perception is that it's not as bad here as it is in other places. The reality is, we don't react until we have a crisis.*
- *There could be more time spend on land use designation and zoning as it impacts the transportation system.*
- *Micro planning rather than macro planning. We need more integrated planning, e.g., Hiway 99 redevelopment planning with property owners, transportation planners, others.*
- *The road system has a finite amount of traffic that it can handle. Zoning has to compliment the traffic system.*
- *Concurrence in a flexible form can be used to foster, stimulate and shape land use.*
- *We transportation jurisdictions should strive for being the first to be proactive in the transportation land use planning arena.*
- *Capture the business community's interest. They drive the development, e.g., Ridgefield Junction.*
- *The important hot spots are 179<sup>th</sup>, 219<sup>th</sup> and 319<sup>th</sup> / I-5 intersections.*
- *Land use policy and need for tax base are out of whack – but transportation absolutely relates.*
- *Growth management is incentivizing.*
- *Industrial growth is fighting for a place at the table.*
- *Housing is coming – and maybe coming along I-5, which is going to wreck havoc on I-5.*
- *We're not doing anything proactive – not investing in transportation in a proactive manner. We only get dollars for crisis points.*